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EARLY TIMES IN THE DIOCESE OF HARTFORD, CONN., 1829—1874

The history of the organization of the Church in Connecticut may be said to date from the arrival in Hartford, August 26, 1829, of the Rev. Bernard O'Cavanagh, the first pastor assigned to the Catholics of that city, with the State for his field of missionary effort. Almost ninety years have gone by since that time, filled with splendid progress; but so far as the pages of history relate there was no parish, no church and no resident priest in Connecticut before his coming.¹

There is no record of the number of Catholics in the state in 1829, but a census taken by Bishop Fenwick six years later, in 1835, gives the number of Catholics then as seven hundred and twenty.² Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Baptists, and a few other sects formed the bulk of the population. The record of to-day, by way of contrast, tells its own story: Congregationalists—ministers, 393, churches, 332, members, 69,192; Episcopalians—clergy, 215, parishes, 227, communicants, 44,186; Baptists—ministers, 175,

¹ Our authorities for the facts contained in this sketch are: I. SOURCES (a) *Manuscript*: Records of the Sisters of Mercy, Mount St. Joseph's Mother-House, Hartford, Conn., personal memoranda of historical reminiscences and diocesan and parish records; (b) *Printed*: United States Catholic Historical Society's *Historical Records and Studies*. New York, 1899, etc.; ROONEY, *The Connecticut Catholic Year Book*. Hartford, Conn., 1877; *Public Records of Connecticut*. Hartford, Conn., 1850-90; *The Connecticut Catholic*. Hartford, Conn., 1876-77; *The Catholic Almanacs and Official Directories*. New York, 1844-50-56-73, 1915. II. WORKS: *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York; JAMES ROOSEVELT BAYLEY, *A Brief Sketch of the Early History of the Church on the Island of New York*. New York, 1870; RICHARD H. CLARKE, *The Deceased Bishops of the Church in the United States*, vol. I-II. New York, 1872; MOTHER TERESA AUSTIN CARROLL, *Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy*. New York, 1889; REV. AUGUSTUS J. THÉBAUD, S. J., *Irish Race Past and Present*. New York, 1873; J. P. PRENDERGAST, *Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*. Dublin, 2nd Ed. 1875; REV. JAMES H. O'DONNELL, *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, vols. I and II, Boston, 1899; REV. JAMES FITTON, *Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England*. Boston, 1872; BENSON J. LOSSING, *Centennial History of the United States*. Hartford, Conn., 1873.

² In 1845, the Catholic population of the State was 4817; in 1890, the Catholics numbered 152,945; the non-Catholics, 142,184.

churches, 152, members, 26,589; Catholics—priests, 389, churches and chapels, 340, population, 441, 193.³

The Puritans, who had been themselves the victims of intolerance both in England and in the Colonies, were equally intolerant, says Lossing, when clothed with power themselves. "Their ideas of civil and religious liberty were narrow . . . they regarded churchmen and Roman Catholics as their deadly enemies to be kept at a distance."⁴ No Colony has a severer history for religious persecution than Connecticut;⁵ and it is undeniable, as has already been shown, that "the concrete sentiment of the colony was bitterly hostile to Catholics, and this hostility was not infrequently manifested by men of exalted station in civil life and in high position in the church. The spirit of antagonism to all things Catholic was everywhere. Children imbibed it at the maternal breast. It pervaded the religious literature of the times and inspired the philippics of the clergy. Proscription of Catholics was officially taught as a duty 'for the defence of the Protestant religion and people,' while 'popery and slavery' were seriously joined as two evils of equal dye."⁶

There was, however, a first faint beginning of Catholic History before the advent of the Puritans in Connecticut; for it is very probable that, somewhere along the banks of the sleepy Connecticut River, which they named Rio de Buena Madre, in honor of the Blessed Mother, the soldiers of Estevan Gomez heard Mass which was said by the chaplain there, in 1525.⁷ What the Catholic Church

* Report of Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America for 1913 (Report for 1914 not available); figures for 1914, according to the *Catholic Directory* for 1915.

* BENSON J. LOSSING, *Centennial History of the United States*, pp. 118-119. Hartford, Conn., 1873.

* BENJAMIN POMEROY, in the *Public Records of Connecticut*, (1636-1776), vol. ix, p. 28. Hartford, 1850-90.

* *Public Records of Connecticut*, 1689, p. 463, quoted by Rev. JAMES H. O'DONNELL, *History of the Diocese of Hartford*, vol. 1, p. 16.

¹ "Taking the northward course from the Hudson, June 13, the feast of St. Anthony of Padua, the next point indicated in Ribeiro's map of the voyage of Gomez, is the River of the Good Mother, supposed to be the Connecticut, named for the feast of the Visitation of the B. V. M., July 2." Cf. *The Globe of Pope Marcellus II and its relation to the voyage of Verrazano, with notes on the discovery of the Hudson*, article by DA COSTA, in the *United States Catholic Historical Society's Historical Records and Studies*, vol. III (1903), p. 32.

lost during the first hundred years and more of English settlement will never be known in its entirety. History records the coming of many expatriated and enslaved Irish men and women who were drawn from the purest Celtic blood of the south of Ireland to be infused into the primal stock of American New England. It is a page in the annals of Connecticut one would prefer to pass over in silence, were it not that it ushers in a period of iniquitous laws and enactments which barred her Catholic children from civic posts of trust and honor and robbed them of the rights of conscience. Today, with her sons filling creditably many of the public positions thrown open in the broader American spirit of our times, to citizens of all denominations in every New England State, Catholics may well forget this evidence of a Puritanism, which is now happily obsolete.⁸ Accessions to the ranks of the Catholics came slowly and gradually in the earlier days but at the same time steadily and constantly; her growth has been compared to that of the oak,—strong, steadfast, wide-spreading and deep-rooted. As priests and missionaries appeared, at first only occasionally, the old Faith was revived and strengthened by their advent; many new adherents were gained, and the story of New England's conversions makes a brilliant chapter in her history.

Traces of Catholicity are found as early as 1674, when Father Gabriel Druillettes, the Jesuit ambassador from the Abnakis, visited New Haven, and it may be, offered Mass privately while there.⁹

* "Captain John Vernon was employed by the Commissioners for Ireland and contracted in their behalf with David Sellick, bearing date 14th of Sept., 1653, to supply them with 250 women of the Irish nation above 12 years and under the age of 45; also 300 men above 12 years and under 50, to be found in the country within 20 miles of Cork, Youghall, Waterford, and Wexford, to transport them into New England." J. P. PRENDEBGAST, *Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, p. 90. Dublin, 1875. "Just imported from Dublin on the Brig Darby, a parcel of Irish servants, both men and women, to be sold by Israel Boardman at Stamford."—*Connecticut Gazette*, Jan. 5, 1764. "We meet scattered over the broad surface of this country, boys and girls, coming from the same counties, chiefly from sweet Wexford, the beautiful, calm, pious south of Ireland, . . . to be distributed among the 'saints' of New England, . . . The total number of children disposed of in this same way has been variously estimated at from twenty to one hundred thousand." REV. AUGUSTUS J. THÉBAUD, S. J., *The Irish Race Past and Present*, pp. 275, 388, 389. New York, 1873.

Cf. *The Catholic Church in Connecticut—the First Priest in the Commonwealth*, article by SHAHAN in the *United States Catholic Historical Magazine*, vol. III (1890), pp. 16-26. "As an instance of kindly feeling it is related that

It is more than probable that the French chaplains of Rochambeau's army accompanying the troops who marched through Connecticut and who spent two Sundays in camp at Hartford in 1781, celebrated Mass for the Catholic soldiers then on their way to join the American forces on the Hudson. Tradition has it that "it was on the beautiful meadows (at Weathersfield), now within the limits of St. Peter's parish, near where the memorial church of the Good Shepherd stands, that the Abbé Robin, chaplain of the French troops, offered up the first Mass in Connecticut, just one hundred years ago."¹⁰ Abbé Matignon spent a Sunday in Hartford in 1813 and preached in Dr. Strong's church by invitation, and the same year Bishop de Cheverus of Boston, made a visit to Connecticut and is said to have officiated in the house of a friend of his, a teacher of French in Yale College.¹¹ Ten years later he preached in the Hartford State House. Father John Power came from New York in 1827, to attend a dying Catholic in Windsor Locks, and he celebrated Mass in New Haven on his way home. Father Robert Woodley was in Hartford in 1828 and in New Haven the following year.

When the Rt. Rev. Benedict Joseph Fenwick was consecrated Bishop of Boston, on November 1, 1825, his diocese comprised the whole of New England. He paid his first visit to Hartford in 1829, arriving on July 10, and celebrated the Holy Sacrifice the following Sunday, July 12, in an upper room of the house No. 204 Main Street, where the score or more Catholics of Hartford and the vicinity found ample accommodation. He preached in the State House in the evening and the next day arranged for the purchase of Christ Episcopal Church for nine hundred dollars, including the organ but not

Father Druillettes was invited to dine by Governor Bradford of Plymouth who paid his guest the delicate compliment of serving a fish dinner as it was Friday." REV. JAMES FITTON, *Sketches of the Establishment of the Church in New England*, p. 61.

"As the Jesuit missionaries of these days were accustomed to travel with all the requisites for private celebration and under difficult circumstances, I should incline to the opinion that he (Father Druillettes) did celebrate in Connecticut." Letter of Rev. Edward I. Devitt, S. J., Georgetown University, Washington, D. C., to Rev. James H. O'Donnell in *History of the Diocese of Hartford*, vol. II, p. 111. Boston, 1899.

¹⁰ McMANUS, *Centennial Celebration of the First Mass in Connecticut (June, 1781) Sunday, June 26, 1881, in St. Peter's Church, Hartford, Hartford, 1881.*

¹¹ ROONEY, *Connecticut Catholic Year Book*, p. 70. Hartford, Conn., 1877.

the bell. This church was sixty-eight feet long and forty-eight feet wide, with separate rooms which were afterwards used as sacristies and as apartments for the pastor. The Bishop confided the arrangements to Deodat Taylor, a convert, and Nicholas Devereux, a wealthy and generous Catholic of Utica, then on a visit to Hartford, advanced the necessary money.¹² A vacant lot at the corner of Main and Talcott Streets was secured and in the following November the church was moved to the new location, a spacious basement, suitable for school purposes, having been built before the removal.

Bishop Fenwick returned to Boston on July 15, and sent the Rev. Bernard O'Cavanagh to Hartford as its first resident pastor. Father O'Cavanagh said Mass in a private house at Main and Asylum Streets and in Masonic Hall, at Main and Pearl Streets, until the work of renovating and remodeling the church was finished. The church was dedicated on July 30, 1830, under the patronage of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity, and it remained Hartford's first church and pro-cathedral until the dedication of St. Patrick's Church on December 14, 1851. After this the old church was but little used, and on May 12, 1853, it was totally destroyed by fire. In June, 1866, the sale of the property ended the history of this historic site.

Father O'Cavanagh made his theological studies at Mount St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, and was ordained in Holy Cross Cathedral, Boston, by Bishop Fenwick, on July 19, 1829. He was a zealous young priest and remained at Holy Trinity Church until October 27, 1831, during which time he performed all the duties of a missionary priest there besides attending to the Catholics he found at Windsor Locks, New London, Bridgeport and New Haven, where he solemnized his first recorded marriage ceremony (January

¹² "In the fall of 1829 my late husband, Mr. Nicholas Devereux, and myself spent a Sunday in Hartford. In the evening Mr. Imlay, a banker, called bringing with him Col. James Ward. After a while the conversation turned upon religion and Mr. Devereux, whose first thought was always of the Church, declared how much he regretted that the Catholics were not able to purchase a small Protestant church then for sale, but Father Cavanaugh said it was impossible on account of bigotry and also for want of funds. The conversation ended by Mr. Ward offering to buy the church in his own name and convey it to the Catholics, if Mr. Devereux would furnish the money. This was done and afterwards the money was repaid."—Extract from letter of Mrs. Nicholas Devereux to Bishop Galberry on the occasion of the dedication of St. Patrick's church, Hartford, Nov. 19, 1876.

19, 1831). Later he labored in Worcester, Westfield, Chicopee and Ware, Massachusetts.

Another pioneer missionary in Connecticut, who succeeded Father O'Cavanagh in Hartford and remained there until 1836, was Father James Fitton. He was a native of Boston, the son of a convert, and made his theological studies under Bishop Fenwick. With Father William Wiley he has the honor of being the first priest ordained in Boston (December 23, 1827). He traveled all through Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, before the advent of the railroad and when the methods of travel were primitive and comfortless. It was he who built the church of Our Lady of the Isle at Newport, and it was he also who purchased the site of Holy Cross College in Worcester. After a remarkable missionary career he celebrated his sacerdotal golden jubilee while pastor of the church of the Holy Trinity, East Boston, where he labored during the last twenty-six years of his life, going to his reward September 15, 1881. Father Fitton's successor was the Rev. Peter W. Walsh, whose appointment dates from April 27, 1836. He presented a class of twenty-five to Bishop Fenwick for confirmation June 20, 1837, and shortly afterwards relinquished the charge to the Rev. John Brady, in August of the same year. He built St. Patrick's, Hartford's second church, at the corner of Church and Ann Streets, which was dedicated December 14, 1851, and where he remained in charge until shortly before his death, November 16, 1854.

The diocese of Hartford, which at that time comprised Connecticut and Rhode Island, was established on the recommendation of the Fifth Council of Baltimore, May 14, 1843; and the Rt. Rev. WILLIAM TYLER was consecrated its first bishop in the Baltimore cathedral, by Rt. Rev. B. J. Fenwick, on March 17, 1844. Bishop Tyler reached his See on April 12, and found only eight priests and seven churches in his entire diocese. After an episcopate of five years and three months he died June 18, 1849, in his forty-third year, having increased the number of priests to fourteen and the number of churches to twelve. He was born at Derby, Vermont, June 5, 1806, of a family of converts and a convert himself. He was the son of Noah and Abigail Tyler, the grandson of the Rev. Daniel Barber and the nephew of the Rev. Virgil Horace Barber, all of whom became converts to the Faith. His sisters Rosetta, Catherine, Martha and Sarah, later entered religion as Sisters of Charity

at Emmitsburg. He was converted in his sixteenth year and was ordained to the priesthood June 5, 1827. After a period of missionary work in Maine he was appointed Vicar General of the Diocese of Boston, where he remained up to his consecration. After a brief stay in Hartford he placed the church there in charge of Father Brady and went to Providence, which was a larger city with a larger Catholic population, and there he selected the church of Saints Peter and Paul as his cathedral. He not only performed all the duties of a priest, hearing confessions, visiting the sick and instructing the ignorant, but he visited all portions of his diocese, acting as pastor of scattered congregations which had no pastor of their own, and administering confirmation wherever possible. Notwithstanding the poverty of his people and the many demands on his meagre resources, he succeeded in enlarging and improving his cathedral, which was dedicated April 11, 1847. On that occasion the Rt. Rev. John Bernard Fitzpatrick, Bishop of Boston, pontificated and the Rev. Dr. Ryder, President of Holy Cross College, preached the dedicatory sermon.

Bishop Tyler labored with untiring zeal to lay the foundations of the Church in his diocese and to present her ceremonials in the most imposing and becoming manner possible to a people unaccustomed to them. He awakened in the minds of his people the realization of the benign influence of the Church in their State, although feeble health greatly embarrassed his labors and the time and opportunity for achieving results as brilliant as he had anticipated had not yet arrived. About the time of his consecration he contracted a severe cold which developed into consumption, and his anxiety for his flock, together with the difficulties which arose from the poverty of the diocese and the double labors he underwent as priest and bishop, hastened the march of the disease. With a certificate from his physician that he could not survive much longer, he attended the Seventh Council of Baltimore, May 6, 1849, and asked permission to resign. The Council, however, recommended a co-adjutor in the person of Very Rev. Dr. Bernard O'Reilly, who was then Vicar General of the Diocese of Buffalo. Bishop Tyler returned to Providence and in six weeks breathed his last.¹³

¹³ *Memorial of the Rt. Rev. William Tyler, First Bishop of Hartford, Connecticut.* Translated by Rev. J. M. Toohey, C.S.C., from the original French, written by Edward P. Le Prohon, A. M., M. D., in the *American Catholic Histori-*

When he was consecrated as Hartford's second bishop on November 10, 1850, Bishop O'REILLY was in the prime of life, with an experience behind him of twenty years filled with every phase of missionary labor, and he took up the work laid down by his predecessor with an energy and zeal that soon bore abundant fruit. He began his sacred ministry after his ordination, October 13, 1831, in New York City with Brooklyn for his special field of labor. He came through the cholera epidemic of 1832 unscathed, and was then sent to St. Patrick's, Rochester, N. Y., where he served for fifteen years, when he was appointed Vicar General by Bishop John Timon on the erection of the diocese of Buffalo, April 23, 1847. He came to Connecticut just when a bishop of his energy and character was needed. The people among whom he went to reside were thoroughly impregnated by education and training with Puritan bigotry and intolerance. His own people were comparatively few in numbers and weak in social and worldly advantages. But his amiable disposition, his dignified deportment and unaffected piety commanded the admiration and respect of the former while his own flock gained courage from their bishop's energy and from the increase of their churches, clergy and institutions.

Bishop O'Reilly's visitations of his diocese were frequent and laborious; his exertions and responsibilities in the erection of churches, schools, asylums and other institutions were extremely heavy; his attendance at the Councils of Baltimore, his visits to Europe, his zeal in promoting the cause of religion and education, and the countless labors of the episcopal office gave him but little time to rest. The necessary endeavors to provide means to sustain his various important undertakings were most onerous and embarrassing at times, but he undertook and carried them out with vigor and cheerfulness. He increased the number of churches in his diocese to forty-six, besides thirty-seven stations; the number of priests to forty-two, besides twenty-two ecclesiastical students in various colleges preparing for the sacred ministry. In addition he built two academies for boys and three for girls; he erected three orphan asylums and he saw the Catholic population grow to nearly sixty thousand before his death. One of the most fruitful services ren-

cal Researches, vol. XII (1895), pp. 2-10. (Original in *Catholic Archives of America*, Notre Dame, Indiana.)

dered by Bishop O'Reilly to his diocese was the introduction of the Sisters of Mercy, whose institutions of education, charity and mercy have since multiplied in astonishing numbers and have been the instruments of countless benefits and blessings. From these small beginnings, encouraged and blessed by the bishop, the Sisters spread all over the State and they are now conducting about forty parochial schools and many academies. The growth of Catholicity in a diocese can best be seen in the development of its educational institutions, and much credit is due to Bishop O'Reilly's foresight in bringing the Sisters of Mercy to Hartford. Their success during the past half-century is in striking contrast to their reception in the city after the stirring times of 1844-48.¹⁴

Since their introduction into the diocese sixty-two years ago, the Sisters of Mercy have been valued co-laborers with bishops and priests. Besides conducting parochial schools, academies, hospitals

¹⁴ "Arriving at Providence the Sisters were received stealthily. They reached the city, March 12, 1851, the feast of the Translation of the Remains of St. Francis Xavier, the party comprising Mother Mary Xavier Warde, and Sisters Mary Camillus O'Neil, Mary Joana Fogarty and Mary Josephine and Mary Paula Lombard. Indeed, had these women been guilty of some dreadful crime more pains could not have been taken by their friends to isolate them. No sooner had the Sisters taken possession of their poor, little cottage on Weybosset street than the mob gathered, broke all the windows and hooted at the inmates. The inveterate hatred of the benighted people among whom their lot was cast never slumbered. Whenever they appeared on the streets their lives were in danger. To have their clothing soiled with mud or marked with chalked crosses was no uncommon experience. On an appointed evening the Providence Knownothings came several hundred strong, reinforced by fellow conspirators from Boston, Salem and other places. All were fully armed and they brought with them some kegs of powder to be used to demolish the convent. As was afterwards learned, the bishop's house and various churches and schools were to share the same fate. . . . The governor and mayor had been appealed to in vain. In this emergency the Catholics of Providence, mostly stalwart Irishmen, made their way toward the convent and stationed themselves in no inconspicuous way in and about the grounds. The bishop moved around among his people and spoke a few words to the rioters telling them bluntly that the Sisters should not leave the convent for even an hour and that he would defend them with his heart's blood, if necessary. A protestant gentleman, a Mr. Stead, addressed the crowd, warning them of the danger to themselves in case they made any attack, and advising them to abandon their unlawful designs and disperse. They kept up a continuous hooting and yelling but not a shot was fired nor any actual violence attempted and after parleying among themselves they concluded not to molest the convent." Mother Teresa Austin CARROLL, *Leaves from the Annals of the Sisters of Mercy*, p. 389. New York, 1889. Cf. *The Catholic Church in the United States*, vol. II, pp. 345-347, New York, 1914.

and orphanages, they helped in everything that came to their hand, willingly and cheerfully working for the good of religion in these early days of struggle. Their own special work of mercy, such as visiting the sick or caring for the poor, was never neglected, and in doing so they suffered all the privations, struggles and sufferings of pioneers. From 1853 to the establishment of the diocese of Providence in 1872, the four convents of Mercy founded in Connecticut were branch houses of the Mother House in Providence, but since the latter date all the Sisters of Mercy in the State are affiliated with St. Joseph's Mother House in Hartford, the erection of which was begun by Bishop McFarland in 1872. It was in 1851 that Mother Xavier Warde, then the superioress of the original Mercy Convent in Pittsburgh, was invited by Bishop O'Reilly to found a convent in Providence. From this Mother House the convents at Hartford and New Haven were the first off-shoots; they were also established by Mother Warde at the request of the bishop. In answer to Bishop O'Reilly's request, Mother Warde arrived in Hartford, on May 12, 1853, with a band of Sisters who were welcomed to their first convent in that city, a small two-story brick house on Franklin Court (now Allyn Street).¹⁵

Some years previous to the coming of the nuns, Father John Brady had organized a parochial school in the basement of Holy Trinity church where the early teachers were Thomas Maguire, John Murphy, and M. Gillen who was later ordained and labored for years in the missions of Iowa. At the time of the arrival of the Sisters Father Brady had built St. Patrick's church, which was dedicated in 1851, and the first parochial school taught by Religious in Connecticut was in St. Patrick's basement, the larger boys being placed in charge of male teachers among whom were Mr. Fallon, Mr. Buckley and Cornelius O'Neil. The school prospered and its attendance finally reached six hundred. In 1854, the Rev. James Hughes became pastor of St. Patrick's and in the following year he built a large brick convent on Allyn Street which contained a beautiful chapel, apartments for the Sisters and for the orphans, with rooms for some young ladies who wished to attend the academy and board

¹⁵ The first superioress was Sister Mary Paula Lombard and her early community comprised Sister Mary Camillus O'Neil, Sister Mary Pauline Maher, Sister Mary Teresa Murray, Sister Mary Lucy Lyons and Sister Mary Martha Mallon.

with the Sisters. At that time no other boarding-school in Connecticut was taught by Religious and from their high character as instructors it soon became famous.¹⁶ This academy had a highly successful career and about thirty of its graduates entered Religion in various orders. In the sixties St. Patrick's parochial school had an attendance of over one thousand pupils. In 1865 the school was enlarged to double its capacity and the Christian Brothers were invited by Father Hughes to take charge of the boys. Their academy was located in what is now St. Patrick's rectory. It is noteworthy that in all the years these academies flourished no Catholic children attended the public high school.

St. James' orphan asylum was built in 1866 and for years it housed about fifty boys in charge of the Sisters of Mercy, until last year, when the boys and girls were divided between St. Francis' Asylum in New Haven and St. John's Industrial Home of the Xaverian Brothers at Deep River, Conn. Four Sisters of Mercy took charge of St. Peter's school in a new building erected by Father Peter Kelly in the rear of St. Peter's church, under an arrangement with the public school authorities by which the Sisters were to be paid out of the public funds, the school committee reserving the right to fill vacancies in the teaching staff. One of the Sisters retired in the course of time and her place was filled by the appointment of a rather biased non-Catholic. The arrangement was then cancelled. In 1870, the Sisters opened an academy in Charter Oak Place which prospered under Sisters Mary Scholastica Myron, Mary Borgia Douglas and Mary Euphrasia McGlynn. Among New Haven's first parochial school teachers were Patrick Morrissey and Eliza Maher, who were succeeded May 13, 1853, by the Sisters of Mercy. Miss Maher became the wife of Mr. Morrissey, who was retained for many years as assistant to the Sisters in the boys' department.¹⁷

¹⁶ Included in the teaching staff were Mother Teresa Austin Carroll, author of the *Life of Mother Catherine McAuley*; Mother Mary Pauline Maher, Mother Mary Rose Maher, Mother Mary Angela Fitzgerald, Mother Mary Alacoque Waldron and Mother Mary Antonia Daley.

¹⁷ The first superior was Sister Mary Camillus Byrne, a God-child of Mother McAuley, her associates being Sisters Mary Patricia Whalen, Mary Stanislaus Spain, Mary Alphonsus Rudkin, Mary Bridget and Mary Nicholas Dasha. The first pupil enrolled was a little girl named Maher, daughter of a staunch Catholic family. In 1859 she entered the novitiate in Providence as Sister Mary Rose. Some years ago she celebrated her religious golden jubilee and is still a member of the community of St. Joseph's Mother-House in Hartford.

In the early fifties, when Rev. Matthew Hart was appointed pastor of St. Patrick's church, New Haven, he at once began to pay special attention to the spiritual welfare of the children. He organized a school and engaged a Miss Durigan, recently from Ireland, to teach as many children as one large room would accommodate. In 1853 he built a brick school house on Hamilton Street and installed two Sisters in charge of the girls, while a Mr. Fitzpatrick took care of the boys. In 1858 Father Hart built a larger school fronting on Wallace Street and when it was ready for occupancy he made formal application to the school board to employ the Sisters as teachers and pay them the usual salaries, stipulating that they should pass the customary examinations. They passed all tests successfully and were accepted as teachers and since 1868 they have been teaching under the direction of the city school board. The Hamilton school now occupies four buildings and has an attendance of fifteen hundred children. Mother Mary Agnes Welch was the first principal and she held that position until 1882 when Mother Mary Celestine Wall, the present principal, succeeded her. It is the only school in the State which has had only two principals in forty-seven years.

After establishing these works directed by the Sisters of Mercy, Bishop O'Reilly paid his last and fatal visit to Europe to complete his facilities for educating the rising generation. Undaunted by the terrors of an ocean voyage in midwinter he sailed on December 5, 1855. His *Diary* for this date reads as follows: *Leave at four p. m. for Boston, en route for Europe under God's protecting Providence.* This is the last entry in his Journal. His object in going abroad was to secure the services of the Christian Brothers for work in his diocese. He had largely succeeded in his efforts, when he embarked for home, January 23, 1856, on the ill-fated *Pacific* which was never heard of again. As his name did not appear on the passenger-list it was hoped that the bishop had sailed on some other steamer; but in April, all hope was abandoned and in June, solemn requiem Masses were celebrated for the repose of his soul in Hartford and Providence, and in the Cathedral Archbishop John Hughes of New York pronounced an eloquent tribute to his virtues, labors and sacrifices.

From the sad death of Bishop O'Reilly until the consecration of the Rt. Rev. FRANCIS PATRICK McFARLAND, his successor, there

was an interregnum of over two years owing to the troublous times of the pontificate of Pius IX. During this time the Rev. William O'Reilly administered the affairs of the diocese *sede vacante*, and one of Bishop McFarland's first official acts was to confirm him in his office of Vicar General. Bishop McFarland's consecration took place in St. Patrick's church, Providence, March 14, 1858, Archbishop John Hughes of New York being the consecrator, assisted by the Rt. Rev. John Bernard Fitzpatrick, Bishop of Boston and the Rt. Rev. John Timon, Bishop of Buffalo. The sermon of the day was delivered by the Rt. Rev. John McCloskey, then Bishop of Albany and afterwards Archbishop of New York and the first American Cardinal, his diocese being the one from which the new bishop had been selected. Bishop McFarland, followed the precedent set by his predecessors and resided in Providence, where under his fostering care churches, convents and schools were soon multiplied. His diocesan visitations brought him into the most secluded sections of the diocese and he preached, lectured and confirmed wherever he went. A man of extraordinary piety and deep learning, he was simple, plain and approachable by the poorest of his people who were charmed by his urbanity and absence of ostentation. Less than a month after his consecration he was called to New Haven to lay the corner-stone of St. John's church, April 18, 1858, and during that year he dedicated four new churches, at Providence, Harrisonville, Manchester and Waterbury. In the succeeding three years he pontificated at similar ceremonies in twelve other churches. He introduced the Franciscan Fathers at Winsted, the Sisters at Charity, the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Notre Dame at New Haven, and also extended the sphere and usefulness of the Sisters of Mercy. During the Civil War he issued a pastoral counselling fervent prayers for the preservation of the Union and blessed the colors of the Ninth Connecticut and the First Rhode Island Regiments, both made up largely of Catholics. Father Mullen was assigned as chaplain of the former regiment and Father Thomas Quinn as chaplain of the latter. In 1869 he attended the Vatican Council, and then begged the Holy Father to accept his resignation or grant him a co-adjutor on account of his failing health. Accordingly, his diocese was divided by the erection of the See of Providence, and on April 28, 1872, the Rt. Rev. Thomas F. Hendricken,

formerly pastor of Waterbury, was consecrated as the first bishop of the new diocese.

Bishop McFarland then went to reside in Hartford in a house at Woodland and Collins Streets, presented to him by the Catholics of that city. His first thoughts were the erection of a convent for the Sisters of Mercy and of a Cathedral which should be worthy of the diocese. With this in view he bought the old Morgan homestead on Farmington Avenue for seventy thousand dollars, and on May 11, 1873, he laid the corner-stone of St. Joseph's convent. On November 29th he invited the Rt. Rev. Louis De Goesbriand, Bishop of Burlington, to bless the convent and its chapel of St. Joseph which he used as his pro-cathedral until his death, October 12th of the following year. The Rt. Rev. John Loughlin, Bishop of Brooklyn, celebrated the requiem on October 15, in the presence of twelve bishops, one hundred and twenty-two priests and a large congregation of his sorrowing people.

Bishop McFarland was born in Franklin, Venango County, Pennsylvania, April 16, 1819. He was the son of John McFarland and Anne McKeever, his wife, who had emigrated from Armagh, Ireland, in 1806. He was brought up in a truly Catholic atmosphere and from his boyhood he showed evident signs of a vocation to the sanctuary. His first studies were made in a private academy at Franklin under the guidance of James Clark, a convert, afterwards professor of mathematics at West Point and later a Jesuit and professor at Georgetown. He then entered Mount St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, whose golden jubilee (October 6, 1858), he attended as a bishop-alumnus. He was ordained in his twenty-sixth year, May 18, 1845, by Archbishop Hughes, in Old St. Patrick's, New York, and for a time served as professor in St. John's College, Fordham. After a short time as pastor of St. Patrick's church, Watertown, N. Y., he was assigned to St. John's, Utica, one of the oldest churches in the State, built by the illustrious Father Farnan and dedicated August 19, 1821. There he remained until his election as bishop. He attended the first synod of the diocese of Albany (October 7, 1855), acting as secretary of that body. He bade farewell to his parishioners in Utica on March 6, 1858, and came to Providence to prepare for his consecration. The record of his episcopate forms one of the brightest chapters in the history of Connecticut and its story is written large in the annals of Catholicity in New England. When

he took his departure from Providence he left to his successor a solid Catholic body of 125,000 souls in Rhode Island, who were ministered to by fifty-seven priests in fifty churches and chapels with five others in course of construction, and with forty ecclesiastical students preparing for the priesthood. Nine parochial schools with 4225 pupils, six select academies, four literary institutions and an orphan asylum caring for two hundred orphan children, are among the other works he accomplished in the diocese. When he was called to his reward, on October 12, 1874, after presiding over the Church in Connecticut for sixteen years and seven months, he left a Catholic population of 145,000 in that State. There were eighty churches with nine others in course of building, sixty chapels and stations, seventy-six priests and forty-nine ecclesiastical students, thirty-eight parochial schools attended by eight thousand nine hundred and fifty boys and girls, twelve select academies, ten religious and literary institutions, and three orphan asylums harboring one hundred and fifty children.¹⁸

Conspicuous among the hard-working and zealous priests who labored during the early days in Connecticut and under Bishops Fenwick, Tyler, O'Reilly and McFarland were the following: Fathers Bernard O'Cavanagh, James Fitton, Robert D. Woodley, John Brady, William Wiley, John Power, Peter W. Walsh, Peter

¹⁸ The institutions of the Sisters of Mercy in the diocese at that time were the following: Mount St. Joseph's Convent and Academy, Hartford; Mother Pauline Maher, 21 Sisters and 115 pupils. St. Catherine's Convent and Academy, Hartford; Sister Rose Maher, 13 Sisters and 125 pupils. St. Peter's Convent and Academy, Hartford; Sister Mary Euphrasia McGlynn, 7 Sisters and 82 pupils. St. Mary's Convent and Academy, New Haven; Sister Mary Thynne, 10 Sisters and 100 pupils. St. Patrick's Convent of the Sacred Heart, New Haven; Sister Mary Agnes, and 15 Sisters. Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Thompsonville; Sister Mary Alacoque Waldron, and 6 Sisters. Immaculate Conception Convent of Mercy and Academy, Norwich; Sister Mary Paula, 5 Sisters and 112 pupils. Sacred Heart Convent of Mercy and Academy, Westerly; Sister Mary de Sales Fitzgerald, 4 Sisters and 115 pupils. Our Lady of Perpetual Succor Convent and Academy, Putnam; Sister Josephine, 7 Sisters and 300 pupils. St. Elizabeth's Convent and Academy, Middletown; Sister Mary Agnes Healy, 13 Sisters and 200 pupils. St. Bridget's Convent of Mercy, Meriden; Mother Mary Teresa, and 11 Sisters. The Orphan Asylums in charge of the Sisters of Mercy were: St. James' Asylum, boys, 58 orphans; St. Catherine's Asylum for girls, 35 orphans; St. Francis Asylum, New Haven, 55 orphans. Besides these there were St. Joseph's Franciscan Convent, Winsted, Rev. Leo De Saracena, O. S. F.; Convent of St. Margaret of Cortona, Winsted, Mother Jane and 6 Sisters; the Academy of the Immaculate Conception, Waterbury; Sisters of Notre Dame; Sister M. Cecilia, 9 Sisters and 150 pupils; and the St. Patrick's Academy of the Christian Brothers, Hartford, under Brother Quintinian.

Kelly, William Logan, S. J., Patrick Lawler, Matthew Hart, William O'Reilly, John Lynch, James Hughes, Lawrence Walsh, James Smith, Luke Daly, Patrick J. O'Dwyer, Bernard Tully, Edward J. O'Brien, Michael O'Reilly, William E. Duffy, John Synnott, Edward Murphy, Hugh O'Reilly, Henry Wendelschmidt, Michael B. Rodden, Hugh Carmody, Patrick J. Creighton, Thomas Drea, John Cooney, James Smyth, James McDermott, Michael Lynch, Thomas J. Synnott, Peter A. Smith, Michael O'Neil, John C. Brady, Thomas Ryan, Michael O'Farrell, Ambrose Manahan, Francis Kiernan, Constantine Lee, Patrick Gaynor, Michael McCabe, Peter Cody, Peter Henderkin, Richard O'Gorman and M. A. Wallace.

Starting from a single Catholic church in Connecticut in 1829, new churches were built in many parts of the State during the forty-five years (1829-1874) covered by this sketch. A chronological list of these churches erected during the episcopates of Bishops Fenwick, Tyler, O'Reilly and McFarland, is of historic interest and proves in a graphic manner the vitality of the Catholic Faith and devotion during this time:—¹⁹

JAMES A. ROONEY, LL. D.

¹⁹ 1830—Holy Trinity, Hartford. 1833—Christ Church, New Haven. 1843—St. James', Bridgeport; St. Mary's, New London. 1845—St. Mary's, Norwich. 1847—Immaculate Conception, Waterbury. 1848—St. Mary's, New Haven; St. Joseph's, Willimantic, 1849—St. John's, Stamford. 1850—St. Mary's, New Britain; St. Bernard's, Tariffville. 1851—St. Mary's, Norwalk; St. Patrick's, Hartford; St. Mary's, Stonington. 1852—St. Mary's, Windsor Locks; St. John's, Middletown; St. Joseph's, Chester; St. Patrick's, New Haven. 1853—St. Joseph's, Winsted; St. Mary's, Milford. 1854—St. Andrew's, Colchester; St. Bridget's, Cornwall; Immaculate Conception, Branford; St. Mary's, East Bridgeport; St. Thomas', Fairfield; St. Patrick's, Falls Village; St. Bernard's, Rockville. 1855—St. Joseph's, Bristol. 1856—St. Rose's, Meriden; St. Mary's, Hamden; St. Augustine's, Seymour; St. Patrick's, Collinsville. 1857—Holy Trinity, Wallingford; Immaculate Conception, Waterbury. 1858—St. John's, New Haven; St. Francis', Naugatuck; St. Rose's, Newton. 1859—Immaculate Conception, Norfolk; St. Peter's, Hartford; All Hallow's, Moosup; St. Mary's, Putnam. 1860—Immaculate Conception, Baltic; St. Patrick's, Thompsonville; St. Peter's, Danbury; St. Mary's, Greenwich; Assumption, Westport; St. Francis Xavier's, New Milford; St. Francis', Torrington. 1861—St. Michael's, Westerly. 1863—St. Aloysius', New Canaan. 1864—St. James', Danielson. 1867—St. Edward's, Stafford Springs; St. Mary's, Ridgefield; Assumption, Ansonia; St. Anthony's, Litchfield. 1868—St. Francis', New Haven. 1869—St. Augustine's, Bridgeport. 1870—St. Patrick's, Mystic; St. Mary's, Putnam; Sacred Heart, Wauregan; Immaculate Conception, New Hartford; St. Mary's, New Haven. 1871—St. Thomas', Thomaston; St. Joseph's, New Canaan. 1872—St. Joseph's, Grosvenordale. 1873—St. Thomas', Goshen; St. Boniface's, New Haven; St. Joseph's pro-cathedral, Hartford. 1874—St. James', S. Manchester; Sacred Heart, New Haven.